

non-parasitic animals in the locality indicated. Is there anything remarkable in this, or is it an event of ordinary occurrence?

There is only one other way of accounting for the insect's admission—by supposing that it had entered the intestine through the anal orifice (?). "*Sub judice lis est.*"

I am, Gentlemen,  
Yours very truly,  
W. HOUGHTON.

*Pretended "Parthenogenesis" of the Bernhard Crab.*

"Cornwall, Sept. 5, 1770.

"SIR,—I pass a great deal of my time in walking on the cliffs and by the sea-side in this county. As I was one day going over the rocks at low water, I saw an infinite number of Periwinkles, out of which projected two claws resembling those of a Lobster. Curiosity induced me to break the shells of several, to discover, if I could, how the little creature could introduce itself, as the body of the Periwinkle generally filled its shell.

"I was soon satisfied in my searches, but, to my astonishment, found that it was the body of the Periwinkle that was undergoing this metamorphosis. This occasioned my breaking several shells more, in all of which I found the same appearances, and had the satisfaction of demonstrating to several gentlemen of undoubted veracity that the body of the Periwinkle actually underwent this change till it became a perfect Lobster. In some you might discern the most minute change, others were half-formed, and some were completely formed. I spread a dozen at least on a table at one time, which they traversed many times, to the satisfaction of several gentlemen present.

"It is a received opinion that the infant Lobster takes refuge in the empty shell of a Periwinkle. I was one of those who imbibed that opinion before I made this discovery.

"As I am little versed in studies of this nature, I request the thoughts of your ingenious correspondents on the subject. It seems probable that the Periwinkles may be produced from the berries of the Lobster, as it seems impossible that the Lobster can be produced in the first state from the Periwinkle.

"I am, Sir, yours, &c.,  
"CORNUBIENSIS." \*

*New American Otter.*

In the 'Canadian Naturalist' for June 1863, Mr. George Barnston describes and figures the skull of a new North-American Otter, which he calls *Lutra destructor*. He observes, "I propose to show that there exists throughout a great portion of the British territory of North America, if not further south, a smaller species of Otter, well known to the aboriginal Ojibways and the Crees as the *Pinaikeewaw-keek*, the breaker of beaver-houses and the dams. He closely re-

\* Extracted from a newspaper of the above date.

sembles the larger Otter in dentition, colour, and shape, but is of more slender structure, and possesses marked differences in the proportion of the coronoid bone. He has, besides, distinct habits and modes of life, especially in his search for sustenance, which, I think, altogether entitles us to consider him as specifically distinct from the *Lutra canadensis*."

*On two Forms of Anthriscus sylvestris.*

By Dr. J. E. GRAY, F.R.S.

On the banks of the Thames, between Kew and Richmond, there are now to be seen growing in abundance, side by side, so close together that their leaves are often to be seen intermixed, two very distinct forms of *Anthriscus sylvestris*: at least, I consider they are both that plant, as I cannot find any character in the flower, the fruit, or the leaves by which I can separate them.

One is a large succulent plant, of a bright, rather palish green colour, much branched, and with large broad leaves; the stem is thick, and has a few large ridges, and the flowers are rather large. The other is a slender rigid-stemmed plant, with comparatively few and distant branches, and comparatively few and smaller leaves. The stem has many small, subequal ridges. The stem and foliage are always dark, and generally of a more or less purple shade; but I have seen a few plants in which the stem and leaves were dark green.

These differences cannot arise from soil or any difference of external circumstances, such as situation, exposure, &c., as they grow side by side, and come into flower at the same time.

I have observed a similar fact, but one not so strongly marked, of two forms growing side by side and flowering at the same period, in the Wood-Anemone (*Anemone nemorosa*), which I described a short time ago.

Now, I wish some of your readers would explain to me, by any of the modern or ancient theories of the origin of species, what we are to learn from the existence of two forms of the same species in the same locality, under the same circumstances, and occurring at the same time. They cannot be regarded as varieties produced by soil or external circumstances, or any of the other conditions that are supposed to cause variation in species; and yet they are not species as we commonly regard species, though, if such specimens were collected in a foreign country, and only examined from the specimen in an herbarium, one might be inclined to regard them as allied species or very distinct varieties.

I do not find the two forms of this plant noticed in any of the English works on botany, nor in any of the floras of France or Germany that occur to me.

Indeed, what a wonderful thing it is to consider how plants of the same kind flower at the same period! how one week the banks of the railways are covered with one, and then with another kind, all the plants of each in bloom at once, and that the different species follow one after the other in the same succession year after year—varying,